WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of defining and collecting data in an information management system, comprising:

creating an information collection structure to produce a representation of a shared database;

receiving a read request or a write request from a user interface; and

accessing said representation to execute said read request or said write request without having to access said shared database.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

creating a plurality of representations of said shared database from said information collection structure.

3. The method according to claim 2, further comprising:

customizing each of said plurality of representations to a specific user group without altering the physical structure of said database.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein said customizing step comprises:

collecting a new type of data currently defined within said database.

5. The method according to claim 3, wherein said customizing step comprises:

collecting a new type of data not currently defined within said database.

6. The method according to claim 3, wherein said customizing step comprises:

providing metadata from said information collection structure to customize a view of said database.

7.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said creating step comprises:

providing metadata to transpose said representation to said database and said user interface.

8.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said creating step comprises:

providing metadata to manage general entities.

9.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said creating step comprises:

providing a plurality of generic objects for said information collection structure, wherein each of said generic objects includes one or more presentation objects.

10.   The method according to claim 9, wherein said creating step further comprises:

defining a unique object name space for each of said generic objects, said unique object name space having a unique name for a unique combination of a presentation object with a data source from said database.

11.   A method of defining and collecting data in an information management system, comprising:

creating an information collection structure to manage a database at a logical level;

receiving a request from a user interface for a customized view of said database; and

producing said customized view without altering the physical structure of said database.

12.   An information management system, comprising:

a database comprising a plurality of integrated records;

an information collection structure for producing a representation of said database; and

a user-interface for enabling submission of a read request or a write request to said representation, wherein said information collection structure executes said read request or said write request without having to access said integrated records.

13.   The system of claim 12, wherein said information collection structure produces a plurality of representations of said database, wherein each of said plurality of representations is customized for a specific user group without altering the physical structure of said database.

14.   The system of claim 12, wherein said information collection structure comprises a generic object or a generalized algorithm.

15.   The system of claim 14, wherein said database drives said generic object or said generalized algorithm to support said read request or said write request.

16.   The system of claim 14, wherein an XML template drives said generic object or said generalized algorithm to support said read request or said write request.

17.   The system of claim 14, wherein said user interface comprises a template associated with said generic object or said generalized algorithm.

18.   The system of claim 12, wherein said user interface is script driven.

19.   The system of claim 12, wherein said information collection structure comprises a plurality of generic objects, wherein each of said plurality of generic objects includes one or more presentation objects.

20.   The system of claim 19, wherein each of said plurality of generic objects is associated with a unique object name for a unique combination of a presentation object with a data source from said database.

21.   The system of claim 12, wherein said integrated records comprise clinical research information.

22.   The system of claim 12, wherein said integrated records comprise at least one of patient information, protocol information, therapy information, and clinical results.

23.   The system of claim 12, further comprising:
a security mechanism for controlling access to said database.

24.   The system of claim 12, further comprising:
a security mechanism for controlling access to said information collection structure.

25.   An information management system, comprising:
a database;
a shared application infrastructure for structuring said database at a logical level; and

a user-interface for presenting data from said database, wherein said shared application infrastructure produces a customized view of said database.

26.   A method of defining and collecting clinical research information in an information management system, comprising:

creating an information collection structure to produce a representation of a shared database;

receiving a read request or a write request for clinical research information from a user interface; and

accessing said representation to execute said read request or said write request without having to access said shared database.